

MEMORANDUM
ON
THE VARIOUS TRIBES INHABITING
PENANG AND PROVINCE WELLESLEY
BY THE LATE
J. R. LOGAN.

[On the 30th November, 1880, the late Mr. DAVID AITKEN wrote to the Government stating that the late Mr. JAMES RICHARDSON LOGAN had written, for the Government, a paper on the Wild Tribes of Penang and Province Wellesley, which Mr. AITKEN believed would be found in the records of the Lieutenant-Governor's Office, Penang.

A search was made, and the paper was found. It has never before been published, and, coming from the pen of such an authority as Mr. J. R. LOGAN, will be read with great interest.—ED.]

THE native races of the Malay Peninsula are the Simang, the Binua, the Malay, and the Siamese.

Simang.

The Simang are scattered in small disconnected herds throughout the forests of the broadest part of the Peninsula, comprising the Malay States of Kedah, Pêrak and Tringganu. They are the sole aborigines of Kedah, including Province Wellesley, in the vicinity of which some families continued to wander until the increasing denseness of the Malay, Samsam, and Chinese popula-

tion, and the felling of the forests, drove them further inland. At present the nearest groups are those on the river Krîan, above the British boundary.

The Simang are a variety of the Papuan branch of the oldest race of India, Ultra-India, and the Indo-Pacific Islands, the other branch being the Dravido-Australian.

The Papuans are distinguished from the lower Dravirian tribes and castes, and from the Australians, more by the spiral growth of the hair than by any other constant physical characters. From the second great race of this ethnographical province—the Himalaic—both branches are well differentiated by the non-Mongolic shape of the head and by the comparative slenderness of the trunk and limbs, and darkness of the skin. The most striking and general peculiarity of the head is the pyramidal form of the nose, caused by the root sinking deeply in below, or forming an acute angle with the base of the prominent brow ridge.

In the Simang, the head is small, the forehead low, rounded, narrow and projecting over the root of the nose; the corona ridged or obtusely wedge-shaped; the occiput rounded and somewhat swelling; the lower part of the face oval or ovoid; the cheek bones broad, but not remarkably prominent, except with reference to the narrow forehead; the upper jaw not prognathous; the nose short and somewhat sharp at the point and often turned up, also spreading; the mouth large, but lips not thick; the projecting brow nearly on the same vertical line with the nose, mouth and chin; hair spiral and tufted; the beard of much stronger growth than with the Himalaic race; the eyes fine, middle-sized and straight; the iris large, black and piercing; the conjunctive membrane yellow; the person slender; the belly protuberant; the skin fine and soft, varying in colour from yellowish brown and dark-brown to black; average height about four feet eight inches.

The Papuan race exhibits great variety throughout its range from the Andamans to the Viti-Archipelago, New Caledonia and Tasmania. Some tribes are more Australoid than others; some are more Mongolic, especially where there has been intermixture with the Himalaic race; and some approach the more debased and prognathous varieties of the African Negro, but, as a whole, the race is much more akin to the Dravirian (where the latter has not been

improved by Iranian crossing), and to the East African, than to the Himalaic. While the Australian branch, protected from the Malayo Polynesian by the character of the Southern Continent, preserves a distinct form of language, which connects it with Dravidian. No example has yet been brought to light of a Papuan tongue possessing distinct pronouns and a distinct structure from the Malayo-Polynesian or Himalayan. Some of the vocabularies contain many upper Asiatic words not found in Malayo-Polynesian dialects. The Simang dialects, while containing a large number of Malayo-Polynesian vocables, are more Himalaic than the Malayo-Polynesian glossaries. The pronouns have the peculiar forms that were current in the dialects of that branch of the Himalaic people which predominated in the Gangetic basin and its confines before the Arians advanced into it, and which spread its language and civilization eastward till they prevailed from Guzerat to Tonquin. These pronouns and many other common vocables are still used by the Kol or Southal tribes on the Ganges, the Kyi or Kasia in the Brahmaputra basin, the Palaong and the Mon or Peguans on the Irawadi, the Kambojans on the Mekong, and the Anamese on the Tonquin. The Simang and some of the Binua tribes appear to have obtained them at the time when the Mon-Kambojan nation was established on the Irawadi, the Menam and the Mekong, before the Burmans rose into power, and long before the Shans or Siamese advanced westward into Assam and southward down the Menam, separating the Mons from the Kambojans. That a Mon Colony continued to flourish on the Muda down to a period long subsequent to the intrusion of the Arians into India, is evidenced by the rock inscriptions in characters similar to the ancient Mon, which are found in Province Wellesley and on Bukit Mariam.

The Simang are about the least civilised of the tribes of the Indian Archipelago. They wander in the forest, preying on wild animals, which they kill with spears, arrows and darts from the blow pipes; their only clothing, a piece of bark round the middle; and their temporary lairs only protected from the weather by a few branches or leaves hung over two or three sticks.

Binua.

These tribes, Himalaic in race, are scattered over the Southern

half of the Peninsula, from Johor to Pêrak, none being found in Kedah.

The variations in the physical characters are considerable, but these are more closely allied to the Malayan than to the finer Indonesian. In a common form of the head, it is somewhat prognathous, the zygomatic have much lateral development, the forehead is very narrow, and the eye also is more oblique than in the Malay. In some respects this type resembles that of the Kol and some of the cognate Gangetic and Ultra-Indian tribes, more than that of the Malays. But examples are also found of approaches to the finer Indonesian forms. The person is shorter than with the Malays. The trunk is very long in proportion to the limbs, which are lighter and handsomer than with the Malays. The dialects are Malay, but all the vocabularies that have been collected preserve a variable proportion of non-Malay words. Many of these are Mon-Anam, and the Pêrak tribes and several of the Southern Binuas still use the Kol and Simang first pronoun. The remaining non-Malay vocables are mostly Sumatran, but some have remoter Indonesian affinities. The civilization of the Binua is of the ruder Ultra-Indian and Malay kind. Where they have least intercourse with the Malays, the dress of the men is still a strip of bark passed between the legs and fastened at the waist, and that of the women a piece of bark beaten out and wrapped round them from the waist to the knees. Where there is regular traffic with the Malays, the dress of the latter has been adopted by the males, but the cloth sarong of the females retains the scanty dimensions of the original bark petticoat. The huts are ruder than those of the Malays. Their agriculture is confined to the migratory system that prevails among all the ruder Himalaic tribes, and much of their food is derived from fishing, snaring and hunting, no sorts of flesh being rejected.

The Binua appear to have spread over the Peninsula in pre-Malayan ages, extirpating the Simang in the narrower Southern portion. During the Mon-Kambojan era, that people would occupy towards them the same relation that the Malays now occupy. The language of the Mons and Kambojans would become the *lingua franca* of the districts around their Colonies and of the rivers on both sides of the Peninsula which their praus frequented for barter

with the natives, and it would ultimately, in a large measure, displace the older dialects of the latter. When, at a comparatively modern period, the Malays from Sumatra colonised the Peninsula, their language became everywhere current, and the older dialects are fast perishing before it.

The Malays (Malayu.)

The Javanese preceded the Malays as the first dominant maritime people in the later age of Indonesian civilization, and founded Settlements in the Peninsula as well as in Sumatra. But in the era immediately prior to that of European supremacy, the Malays of Menangkabau, extending their conquests to the sea on both sides of Sumatra, became the leading and most enterprising naval people of the Archipelago. They planted Settlements of their own, or formed quarters on almost every island and on every navigable river.

The Peninsula, as far North as Tennasserim, passed into their hands, Malacca becoming the leading maritime State in the Eastern seas.

There has been considerable intermixture of blood between the Malays and the Binnuas of the interior with the various foreigners who settled in their ports—Chinese, Southern Indians (Klings chiefly), Arabs, Portuguese, Burmese, Peguans, Japanese, as well as with Javanese, Bugis, Achinese, Dayaks, and other Eastern Islanders. Besides the normal variety of characters observable in every race, the maritime Malays have been further modified by this intermixture. The most common type of the least improved Malay is one of the coarsest of the Archipelago. It resembles the Siamese more than the sea-board Burman, shewing a similar flatness and expansion both of the crown and the back of the head. the meeting of the two planes being more angular than convex. When viewed in front, it bulges out laterally beyond the forehead. The nose is low and the lips thick. The lower part of the face is sometimes prognathous. The person is broad and squat, the trunk long, the limbs short and thick. The Malay varies from this lowest type coarse Mongolian with a Negro tendency to the finest form which the Turanian skull can assume without ceasing to be Turanian. The head becomes nearly oval, the occiput rounded, the

nose palder, and the eye brighter, straight and more liquid. The Malay is good-natured, courteous, sociable, gregarious and gossiping, finding unfailing amusement in very small talk, jokes and pleasantries. To superiors, he is extremely deferential, but with no taint of the abject or fawning Asiatics of higher civilization. His intellect has little power of abstraction, and delights in a minute acquaintance with the common things around him, a character that reflects itself in his language, which is as rich in distinctions and details in the nomenclature of material objects and actions as it is poor in all that relates to the operations of the mind. He is slow and sluggish, and impatient of continuous labour of mind or body. He is greedy, and, when his interests are involved, his promises and professions are not to be trusted. His habitual courtesy and reticence and the influence of his religion mask the sway of passions to which he may be secretly yielding and under which he sometimes becomes rapacious, treacherous and revengeful. It has become customary to protest against the dark colours in which the earlier European voyagers painted him, but their error was less in what they wrote than in what they left unwritten. Under bad native Governments, leading a wandering life at sea, or on thinly peopled borders of rivers—the only highways in land covered with forest and swamp—trusting to his kris and spear for self-defence, holding in traditional respect the powers of the pirate and robber, and putting little value on life, the Malay became proverbial for feline treachery and bloodthirstiness. Under the Government to which Malays have been subjected in Province Wellesley, and which has certainly not erred on the side of paternal interference, for it has left them as free as English yeomen, they now form a community as settled, contented, peaceable and free from serious crime as any to be found in British India—a result due to the clearing of forests, the formation of roads, the establishment of a regular Police, and the honest administration of the law.

The Malay treats his children with great affection and an indolent indulgence. Women are not secluded, and the freedom which they enjoy in their paternal homes is little abridged in after-life. Early marriage is customary and necessary, for if it were long postponed after puberty, they would not be restrained by their religion from the license which the habits of the non-Mahomedan nations

of the same race permit to unmarried girls. In the Malay States the law sanctions slavery and subjects the person of the female slave to the power of her master.* In this Settlement, the Malay finds compensation for the deprivation of this right in that of divorce, and the extent which it is availed of renders marriage in practice little more than the legalisation of temporary concubinage. The independence allowed to women, and the manner in which their parents and other relatives usually take their part, enable them to purchase their divorce, or worry their husbands into granting it, whenever they wish to change them.

Siamese.

The Siamese do not differ much from the Malays in their physical characters. The person has much the same height and form. The remarkable flatness of the back of the head is more generally present, the profile is also more vertical, the nose is more often slightly arched, the mouth smaller and firmer. The chief peculiarities are the lowness of the hairy scalp and the staring expression of the eye, caused by the retraction of the upper eyelid.

The Siamese belong to that branch of the Himalaic race which preceded the Tibeto-Burman on this side of the Himalayas. At a very remote period in the history of this branch, the progenitors of the Lau migrated to what afterwards became the Chinese province of Yun-nan, and thus became, in a large degree, isolated from the influence of the sister tribes who spread over the Gangetic basin and Ultra-India, while the Mons and Kambojans became the great maritime nations from the Irawadi to the Mekong, and the Anamese occupied the borders of the China Sea as far North as Tonquin. The Lau retained their sequestered inland position until the Chinese pushed their conquests and settlements into Yun-nan, when between the 7th and 8th centuries hordes of the Lau re-entered the basin of the Irawadi, established themselves at Moung-Goung and gradually subjected and partially occupied Assam. Thus in the 7th and 8th centuries, and subsequently in A.D. 1224, when

* But if the master avails himself of his power, in the case of a debt-slave, he does it at the sacrifice of the debt.—ED.

they founded the Assam rule, a large part of Manipar and the territory now known as the Shan States, their language and civilization had been considerably modified by the influence of the Chinese. It was not till many centuries later that they succeeded in expelling the Kambojans from the lower basin of the Menam and reaching the sea. From Siam they spread down the Peninsula, and all the Malay States appear to have successively been forced or persuaded to acknowledge their suzerainty. At the end of last century, the inhabitants of the territory between Siam and Kedah were almost purely Siamese. In 1821, they expelled the Malay Chiefs and the greater part of the Malay population from Kedah and occupied that country until about 1842, when it was restored to its Native rulers, but as a dependency on Siam. The Southern progress of the race led to parties of Siamese settling in various parts of Kedah and in the N.E. districts of Province Wellesley, in which, Siamese was till lately, and is still to a considerable extent, the current language of the oldest settlers, being Samsam, *i.e.*, Islamised descendants of Siamese with some intermixture of Malay blood.

The Siamese language is radically Himalaic, but owing chiefly, it is probable, to the influence of Chinese, it has been transformed, like some of its sister tongues, from a dissyllabic to a monosyllabic structure. Remnants of the Himalaic prefixes are found in the initial consonants of several words. The forms of the common Himalaic vocables are often broader and more consonantal in Siamese and the sister Mon-Anam languages than in the Tibeto-Burman, and they retain a similar Archaic character in many of the Malayo-Polynesian vocabularies.

These brief notes will be rendered more intelligible by a reference to the general history of the linguistic family to which the languages of the Papuans, the Binua, the Malays, and the Siamese alike belong.

The Archaic-Himalayo-Polynesian formation was related to the Scythic on the one side and the Chinese on the other. It possessed a system of minutely differentiated formatives and pronouns and

a tendency to harmonic agglutination and dissyllableism like the Archaic Scythic and proto-Scythic tongues. Its present representatives may be divided into three branches. The first to separate from the Tibetan or Himalayan mother stem was the Malayo-Polynesian. In the great Asiatic Archipelago it has preserved more of the Archaic structure than the continental branches, and has developed the original phonetic tendencies until it has become highly harmonic, and, in one of its leading and most influential varieties, very vocalic. The next branch that left the Himalayan cradle was the East Tibetan or Mon-Anam. It retains the direct collocation and many of the Archaic forms of the common roots that are found in Malayo-Polynesian. The third branch was the West Tibetan or Tibeto-Burman, to which the present Tibetan and sub-Himalayan, with many of the Ultra-Indian dialects, including Burman, belong. Its distinctive trait is an inverse collocation which may be safely attributed to its immemorial contact with the dialects of the Scythic hordes, who have, from time to time, intruded into Tibet. Both of the continental branches are very impoverished forms of the Archaic-Himalayo-Polynesian. They are distinguished from the insular branch by the decay and in many of them the loss of the ancient phonology. From the influence of the conterminous and intrusive Chinese, or at least from a tendency which is common to them with it, they now partake in various degrees of the crude monosyllabic and tonic phonology which characterises that language. The dialects that have had the longest and closest contact with Chinese, *e.g.*, the Anam and Siamese of the Mon-Anam branch, the Burmese and Karin of the Tibeto-Burman, are now monosyllabic and present so great a contrast to the harmonic languages of the islands, that it is not surprising that Dr. PRITCHARD and other ethnologists have classed them with the Chinese. On the other hand, many of the Gangetic dialects that have not been exposed to contact with Chinese, or with their eastern sisters since their transformation, retain harmonic and agglutinative traits, similar to those that are found with a much more free and powerful development in the Oceanic tongues.

The foreign races found in the Straits Settlements are very numerous, but to describe them, however briefly, would be to enter on

the ethnology of a large portion of Asia and Europe. Chinese from Kuantung and Hok-kien furnish a large portion of our population, and Chinese from other provinces are found either among the general population, or at the Roman Catholic Mission College. Anamese, Kambojans, Burmese and natives of various parts of India, Persia, Arabia, Eastern Africa and Europe represent Continental ethnography, while, in addition to the Malays—Achinese, Battas, Javanese and Bugis represent the Oceanic. In Singapore, Dayaks, natives of the Moluccas and other eastern islanders, are also to be found. There has also been more or less admixture of blood among all these races, with various results. The most distinct classes thus produced are the Portuguese of Malacca, who, from the non-renewal of European blood are now more Malay than Portuguese; the native Chinese of Penang and Malacca, who from constant intermarriage with fresh immigrants from China, have nearly lost all trace of their Malay ancestry on the female side; and the so-called Jawi Pakan, a class between the Kling and the Malay which retains its distinctive characters by a continued intermixture with both races of its progenitors.
